PLATES
ILLUSTRATIVE OF
NATURAL HISTORY
PART 4.

VV/9- 57x

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THIRTY PLATES

ILLUSTRATIVE OF

NATURAL HISTORY,

WITH A SHORT DESCRIPTION

ANNEXED TO EACH PLATE.

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PART IV.

CONTAINING

WEASEL.	SYRIAN GOAT.	ROBIN.	PARTRIDGE.	BOA CONSTRICTOR.
WOLF.	CAPE BUFFALO.	SKYLARK.	QUAIL.	RATTLE SNAKE.
RAT.	PORPOISE.	PARROT.	FLAMINGO.	SWORD FISH.
JERBOA.	GOLDEN EAGLE.	TURTLE DOVE.	GOOSE.	CARP.
HARE.	PEREGRINE FALCON.	TURKEY.	DUCK.	TROUT.
ROEBUCK.	NIGHTINGALE.	COCK.	CORMORANT.	HADDOCK.

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77, GREAT QUEEN STREET, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS;
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1843.

THE COMMON WEASEL.——*Mustela vulgaris.*

The length of the Common Weasel is rather more than eight inches. Its body is long, and feet short: the teeth and claws are extremely sharp. Its colour is reddish brown above, white beneath. It is a quick, watchful animal, and a great enemy to rats, mice, moles, and small birds. It sometimes makes free with partridges, young hares, rabbits, and chickens; but it may be said to do more good than harm when the rats and mice, and other vermin which it kills, are taken into account. Indeed the blame thrown upon the Weasel for robberies in the farm-yard and hen-roost is often due to the Stoat, or Ermine Weasel, which is a bold and destructive little creature. The Common Weasel is an expert climber, and surprises birds in the nest, sucks the eggs or carries off the young; but its chief objects of prey are the field-mouse and the mole. These it follows in their runs, finding its way into small holes, and among the close and tangled herbage of coppice, thickets, and hedge-rows. It hunts by scent, when it loses sight of the object of its pursuit, and will take the water and swim after it, if necessary. It is, however, itself, sometimes attacked by hawks. Mr. Bell * relates the following fact, which shows that violence and rapine, even when accompanied by superior strength, are not always a match for the ingenuity of an inferior enemy.

At Bloxworth, in Dorsetshire, a kite was seen to pounce on some object on the ground, and rise with it in its talons. The kite, however, soon began to show signs of uneasiness, and was evidently endeavouring to force from it with its feet something which gave it pain, when suddenly both fell to the ground. The gentleman who had watched the circumstance, on drawing near, saw a Weasel, apparently unhurt, run away from the kite, which was quite dead, with a hole eaten through the skin under the wing, and the large blood-vessels of the part torn through." The Weasel will stoutly defend her young, against any enemy, and die rather than desert them. The Weasel is mentioned in the Scriptures as an unclean animal.†

* British Quadrupeds, 8vo. p. 145, 1837.

† Lev. xi. 29.

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THE WOLF.——*Canis lupus.*

This animal is of the dog tribe; but it is generally larger, and more strong and muscular than the dog. The outward marks of difference, however, are not so stron as those of temper and habits. It has no good qualities, and has therefore been generally detested and feared. The only part about it of use and value is its skin. Th poet Thomson has, in a few words, drawn a just picture of this savage creature :—

> "Cruel as death, and hungry as the grave;
> Burning for blood, bony, and gaunt, and grim!"

In countries where Wolves are numerous, whole droves flock down from the mountains, or out of the woods, and join in the work of havoc and mischief. They attac the sheepfold, enter the villages, and carry off sheep, lambs, hogs, calves, and even dogs. The horse and the ox are frequently overpowered by their numbers, and ma himself sometimes becomes their victim. They are most terrible in winter, when the cold is severe, the snow on the ground, and their usual food difficult to procure. The are found in most countries of the old and new continent. Captain Franklin met with some white wolves in his voyage to the Polar Seas. In Europe their number are much diminished, in consequence of the increase of population, and the extension of agriculture. They were once very formidable in England. King Edgar, wh began to reign A.D. 959, took great delight in hunting Wolves, and encouraged his subjects to destroy them; and when it appeared that many of them had taken refug n the woods and mountains of Wales, he changed a heavy tax which had been imposed on one of the Welsh princes into a tribute of 300 wolves' heads. After thi eneral description, it must be added, that, by care and kindness, Wolves have sometimes been so tamed, and altered in disposition, as to be rendered even affectionat man. Mr. Bell, in his History of British Quadrupeds, under the description of the Dog, states an interesting case of a Wolf, which, on seeing him, and others whon knew, would come to the front of the cage, to be fondled, and bring its young ones forward also, that they might share in the kindness shown towards it.

Reference to the Wolf is made in several passages of Holy Scripture. The first mention of it is in Gen. xlix. 27, in which the dying patriarch Jacob says of hi ungest son, "Benjamin shall ravin as a Wolf," &c., a passage which the history of the tribe of Benjamin sufficiently explains. The reader will find other allusion the same animal in Isaiah xi. 6; Jer. v. 6; Ezek. xxii. 27; Hab. i. 8; Zeph. iii. 3; Matt. x. 16; Luke x. 3; John x. 12; Acts xx. 29.

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THE COMMON RAT.——*Mus Decumanus.*

The common brown Rat is now so generally met with wherever man dwells, that its original country cannot be ascertained, although there is reason to believe that it comes from a warmer country than our own. It was probably brought hither by means of merchant vessels from some Southern or South-Eastern country; Pennant imagines from the East Indies. In Paris it made its appearance about the middle of the eighteenth century, and in England some years earlier. It is sometimes, by a strange mistake, called the Norway Rat, as if it had been an original native of that country; whereas, when the name was first applied to it, this creature was not known even to exist in Norway. Its habits are mischievous and offensive, causing serious injury to the property of the farmer, the merchant, the tradesman, and the mariner; and infesting equally the dwellings of the rich and poor. We find, to our cost, that it will eat almost any thing it can get; and after eating its fill, will carry off provisions to its retreat. The secresy of its place of abode, between the walls of houses, and under the flooring of cellars, and its ingenuity in avoiding detection, render it a difficult enemy to dislodge; particularly as young ones are produced, from time to time, in large number. Mr. Bell says, "It digs with great facility and vigour, making its way beneath the floors of our houses, and often excavating the foundations of a dwelling to a dangerous extent. There are instances of Rats fatally undermining solid masonwork, or burrowing through dams which had for ages served to confine the waters of rivers and canals." Their ravages on the carcases of horses, in the horse slaughter-house at Montfaucon, near Paris, are said to be astonishing. An official report to the French government stated, "that the carcases of horses killed in the course of a day, (and these sometimes amounted to thirty-five,) are found the next morning picked to the bone." * There are some good traits in this animal which are called forth by kindness; and it has frequently been tamed. In a large cage, containing, cats, rats, rabbits, guinea-pigs, starlings, an owl, a hawk, and several small birds, five fine brown rats were seen, in February 1843, nestling for warmth under a handsome brindled cat, which was watching and accommodating them as if she had been their mother. This interesting collection is called "The happy family." The Rev. Mr. Ferryman, of Iping, Sussex, saw a number of black Rats (a different species from the above) migrating from one place to another. Among them, or rather in the rear, was "an old blind Rat which held a piece of stick at one end in its mouth, while another Rat had hold of the other end of it, and thus conducted his blind companion." This anecdote is told by Mr. Jesse, from the information of Mr. Ferryman.

* See Jesse's Gleanings, Second Series.

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THE JERBOA.——*Dipus Gerboa.*

This pretty little creature is a native of Egypt, Barbary, Syria, the eastern Deserts of Siberia, and some parts of Tartary. It is about eight inches in length, is very active, and in moving, generally uses its hind legs only. On the approach of danger it takes high leaps, and by its great swiftness often escapes powerful enemies. It is a lively, but timid animal, feeds entirely on vegetables, and burrows in the ground like a rabbit. It is fond of warmth, making its bed of the finest and most delicate herbage; and, wrapping itself up close in hay at the approach of cold weather, sleeps during the greater part of the winter. The flesh is reckoned a delicacy by the Arabs. Some writers suppose that this is the "mouse" of Holy Scripture, in which it is spoken of as unclean,* and forbidden as an article of food. When the lords of the Philistines desired to make a trespass-offering, as an acknowledgment that they had offended the God of Israel by bringing His ark from its proper place, their diviners enjoined the offering of such images as represented the evils from which they were delivered. Among these were "five golden mice,"—"images of your mice that mar the land." † "This," says Bishop Patrick, "was also a custom among the ancient heathens, to consecrate to their gods such monuments of their deliverances as represented the evils from which they were freed."

* Levit. xi. 29; see also Isaiah lxvi. 17.

† 1 Sam. vi. 4, 5.

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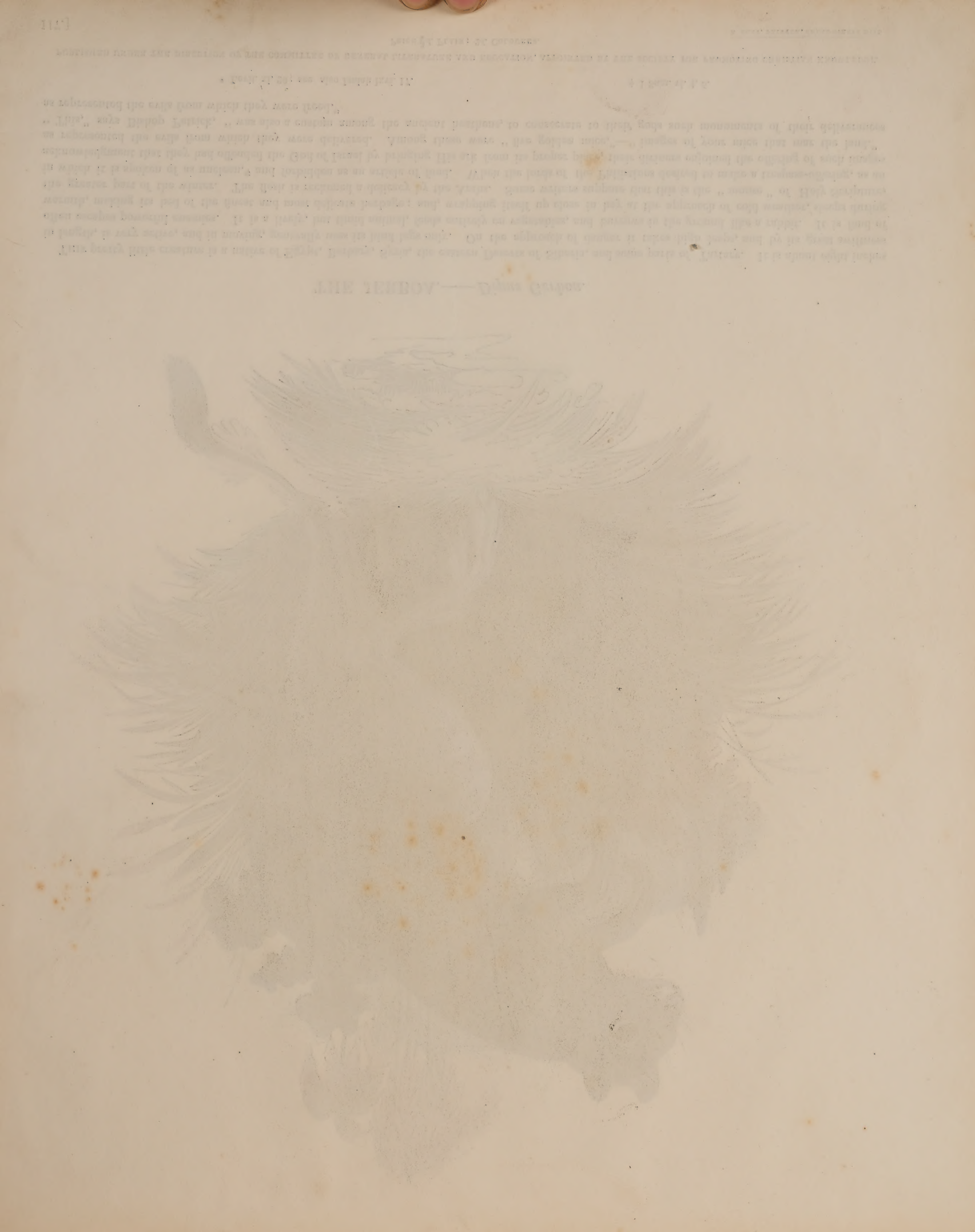

THE HARE.——*Lepus timidus.*

This well-known animal is found throughout Europe. It has no weapons of defence; but it is exceedingly timid, and has a quickness of sight and hearing, as well as a swiftness of foot, which are calculated to protect it from its enemies. Its chief enemy is man, who is tempted by these very qualities to obtain a poor triumph over the harmless creature, by destroying it for the purposes of sport. "Whatever excuses may be found for the pursuit of the Fox, on the score of necessity, as ridding the country of a noxious animal—an excuse, however, which can scarcely be made by those who forbid its destruction by any other means—no such excuse can be made for *this* sport; whilst the degree of danger and difficulty is scarcely sufficient to invest it with enough of excitement to conceal its character of cowardice and cruelty. It is true that coursing is in a degree less cruel, as the poor trembler's agony is comparatively short-lived; but it appears to me that mercy and humanity can scarcely consist with the ardent love of either variety of a sport, the whole interest of which depends on the intense exertion to which a helpless and defenceless creature can be driven by the agonies of fear and desperation."*

The Hare feeds on vegetables only, and sometimes does great injury in fields, gardens, and young plantations. Having made its *form*, or bed, it remains on it during the day, leaving it at night to seek its food, and constantly returning, unless caught or killed; hence, it is said, proverbially, that the wounded Hare *goes home* to die. Its colour helps to conceal it amidst the brown dusky vegetation of heaths and woods; and by the same admirable wisdom of the Creator, those species of the Hare which inhabit the snowy regions of the North become wholly white in winter. It is not difficult to tame hares; and in a domestic state they are very amusing. The poet Cowper gives an interesting account of three tame hares, which he called Puss, Tiny, and Bess, and which he kept long under his care. The Hare was reckoned an unclean animal among the Jews.†

* Bell's British Quadrupeds.

† Deut. xiv. 7.

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THE ROEBUCK.——*Cervus capreolus.*

The Roebuck, which is the smallest of the Deer kind, was formerly an inhabitant of Wales, and of the northern parts of England; but it is now very rare in these places, and is chiefly found in Scotland. It is fond of mountainous districts, while the Fallow-Deer delights in wooded plains, and the Stag in extensive forests. It differs also from them in its domestic habits, being kind and constant to its mate, as its chosen companion for life: "so that," as Mr. Bell observes, "the Turtle-Dove has no longer the exclusive claim to be considered as the honoured emblem of the virtue of conjugal constancy." These animals are not often met with in large numbers, but are seen two or three together; they are extremely cautious, and make use of their fine sense of smelling, as well as hearing, to warn them of an enemy. As they are quick at discovering the approach of man, one way by which their pursuer deceives them, is to hold some lighted peat in the hand, as the animals are accustomed to the smell, and less guarded in proceeding towards the spot. Their cry has a sound between the bleating of a sheep and a bark; at night this cry may be heard at a great distance. They are very active, and bound without much seeming effort across a space of nearly twenty feet. When closely hunted, or suddenly startled, their speed is wonderfully great, and the action of their body and limbs beautiful. The usual method of killing them is to send hounds into the woods, and men to beat the covers; the tracks or passes being guarded by the shooters. Another mode sometimes adopted is to walk quietly through their haunts in the early dawn, and endeavour to get within shot of them, which, however, is no easy matter.

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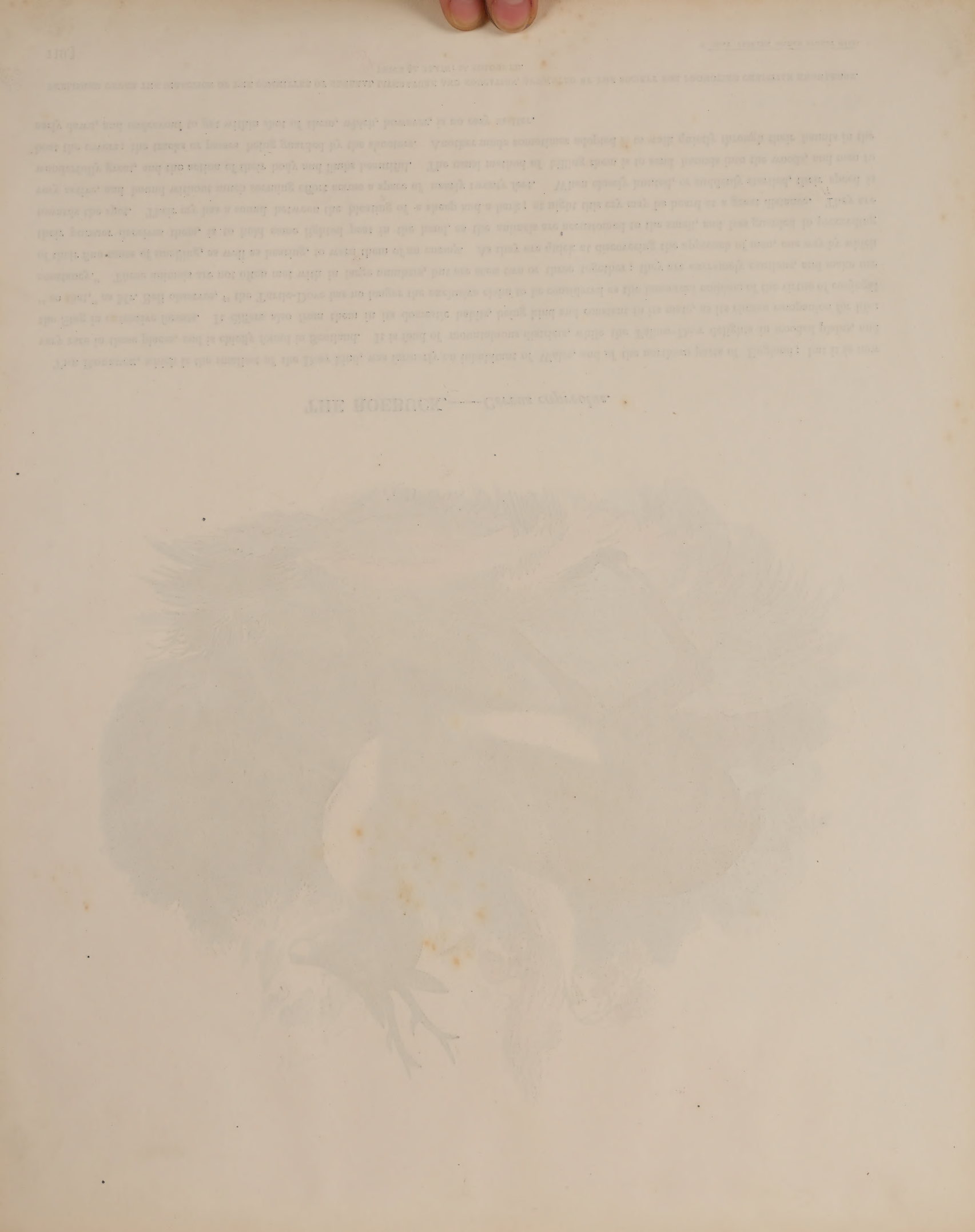

THE SYRIAN GOAT.——*Capra Hircus, var.*

The general appearance and habits of the Goat are nearly the same in all countries. It loves to feed on the tops of hills, and prefers the elevated and rugged parts of mountains. It finds sufficient nourishment on dry and barren spots. Goats are so active, that they leap with ease among the precipitous rocks of the country which they inhabit. They render great service to mankind; their flesh being salted for winter provision, and their milk is used for the making of cheeses. The flocks in which they congregate are from ten to twenty in number. The Syrian Goat is distinguished by its long pendulous ears, which, according to Russell, in his Natural History of Aleppo, are sometimes upwards of a foot in length.

Dr. E. D. Clarke, on his road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, met an Arab with a goat which he led about the country for exhibition. He had taught this animal, while he accompanied its movements with a song, to mount upon little cylindrical blocks of wood, placed successively one above the other, and in shape resembling the dice-boxes belonging to a backgammon-table. "In this manner," says he, "the Goat stood first upon the top of one cylinder, then upon the top of two, and afterwards of three, four, five, and six, until it remained balanced upon the top of them all, elevated several feet from the ground, and with all its feet collected upon a single point, without throwing down the disjointed fabric upon which it stood. The practice is very ancient. It is also noticed by Sandys. Nothing can show more strikingly the tenacious footing possessed by this quadruped, upon the jutty points and crags of the rocks; and the circumstance of its ability to remain thus poised may render its appearance less surprising, as it is sometimes seen in the Alps, and in all mountainous countries, with hardly any place for its feet, upon the sides, and by the brink of the most tremendous precipices. The diameter of the upper cylinder, on which its feet ultimately remained until the Arab had finished his ditty, was only two inches, and the length of each cylinder was six inches."

Frequent reference is made in Scripture to the Goat. Jacob, by the direction of Rebecca, fetched "two good kids of the Goats," * to dress for his father Isaac. "The high hills are a refuge for the wild Goats." † In the Proverbs we find an allusion to their milk.‡ Under the Mosaic law the Goat was selected and offered in sacrifice, as typical of the death of Christ.

* Gen. xxvii. 9. † Psalm civ. 18. ‡ Prov. xxvii. 27.

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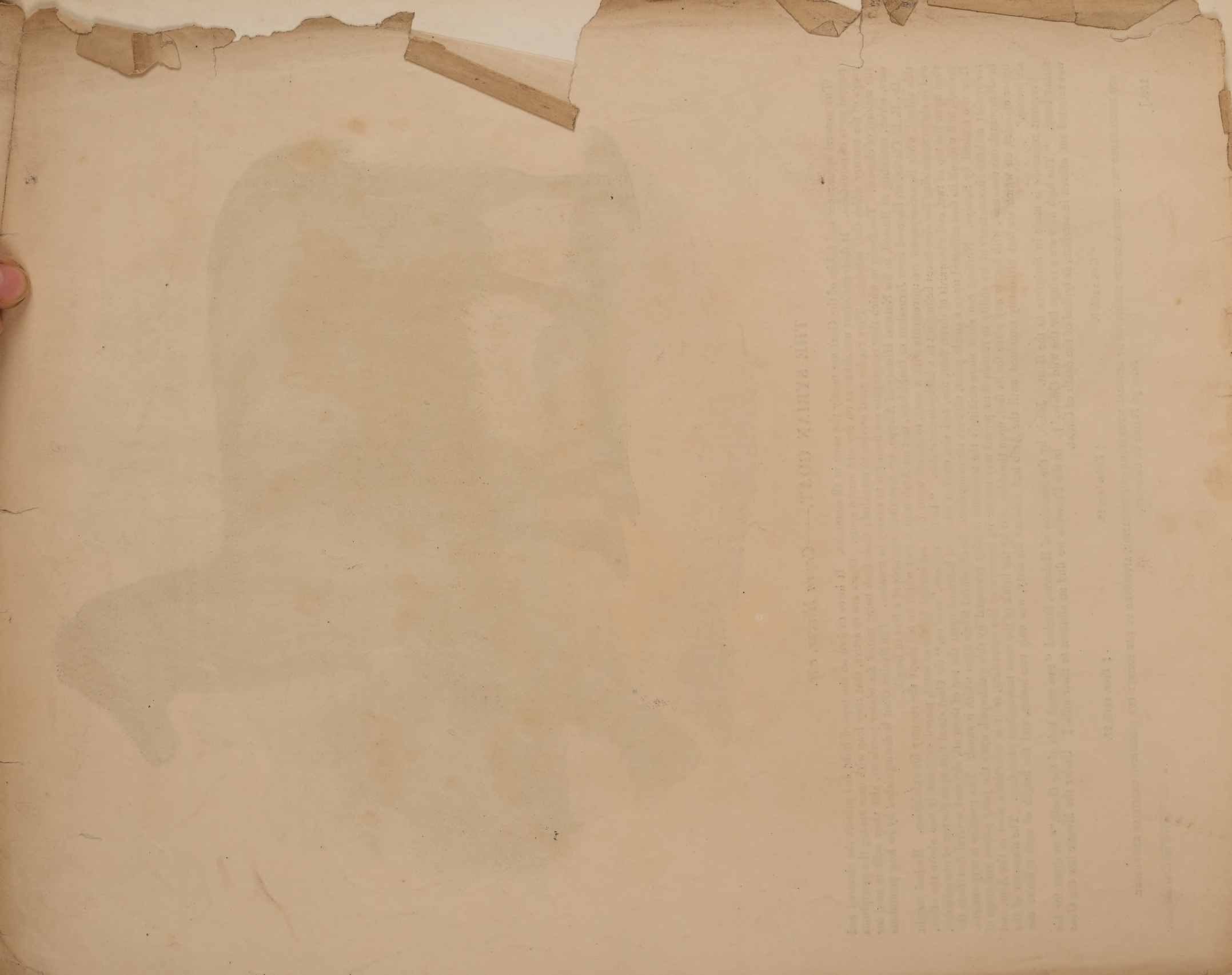

THE CAPE BUFFALO.——*Bos Caffer.*

This animal is of the Ox tribe: it is a native of South Africa, and is well known among the inhabitants of that country for its savage disposition and enormous strength. Happily, as agriculture and population have been extended, this creature has become less an object of terror than formerly among the natives and settlers of the Cape colony; but it stills finds a shelter in the large forests and jungles of the eastern districts. Skulking in one of these jungles, the Buffalo watches the traveller, as he is passing, and suddenly rushes out upon him. In this way, when in a mischievous temper, he will assail a party of men with their horses. It is stated by the Swedish traveller Sparrman, and others, that if one of these Buffaloes kills a man by tossing and goring him with its horns, it will stand over him for a long time, trampling upon him with its hoofs, pressing him with its knees, mangling the body with its horns, and stripping off the skin with its rough and prickly tongue. It appears, however, that the animal shows this shocking ferocity chiefly when in a state of irritation, at certain seasons of the year, or when it has been provoked by hunters. The Hottentots pursue this dangerous and dreadful sport on foot, and, from their lightness and activity, generally succeed in escaping injury and despatching their prey. It is said, that the hide of this Buffalo is so thick and tough, that, in some parts, a common musket-ball will not penetrate it. Tin is therefore mixed with lead in preparing the balls designed for this purpose. Like the hog, it is fond of wallowing in the mire. Its flesh is lean, but juicy, and of a high flavour. The Hottentots cut the flesh into slices, smoke it, and broil it on the coals. The strongest and best thongs for harness are made of the hide.

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THE COMMON PORPOISE.——*Phocæna Communis.*

Animals of the kind called *Cetacea*, such as whales, dolphins, and porpoises, living as they do in the sea, were formerly arranged under the order of fishes; and even Linnæus, following Ray, classes them so; but their structure and habits, when scientifically considered, entitle them to a place among British quadrupeds, inasmuch as these creatures have all the essential characters of mammiferous animals: they have warm blood, and a complete double circulation; they breathe the air by means of true lungs; they bring forth their young alive, and nourish them tenderly and carefully with their milk. The Porpoise is the most common of the class of *Cetacea* in our seas. Its name is derived from the French, *Porc-poisson*, which answers to the term sometimes given to it, of Sea-Hog, or Hog-Fish. These animals make their appearance in herds of various numbers, playing and tumbling with much agility. On the approach of a storm, when the sea begins to be disturbed, they may be seen taking their pastime, as if enjoying that state of the ocean which is so threatening to the helpless mariner. They then show their black backs above the surface, and either in sport or pursuit of their prey, sometimes leap out of the water. The Porpoise is found in several latitudes, and chiefly frequents our coasts in the Autumn and Spring. On the western coasts of Ireland, and among the Western Islands of Scotland, they are met with in vast numbers. They ascend our rivers in pursuit of fish, and have frequently been seen in the Thames above London-bridge. They are sometimes caught for the sake of their oil. Two were taken in the Wareham river, which together yielded sixteen gallons. One of them was found to have milk, which tasted salt and fishy. The total length of the Porpoise is from four to eight feet.

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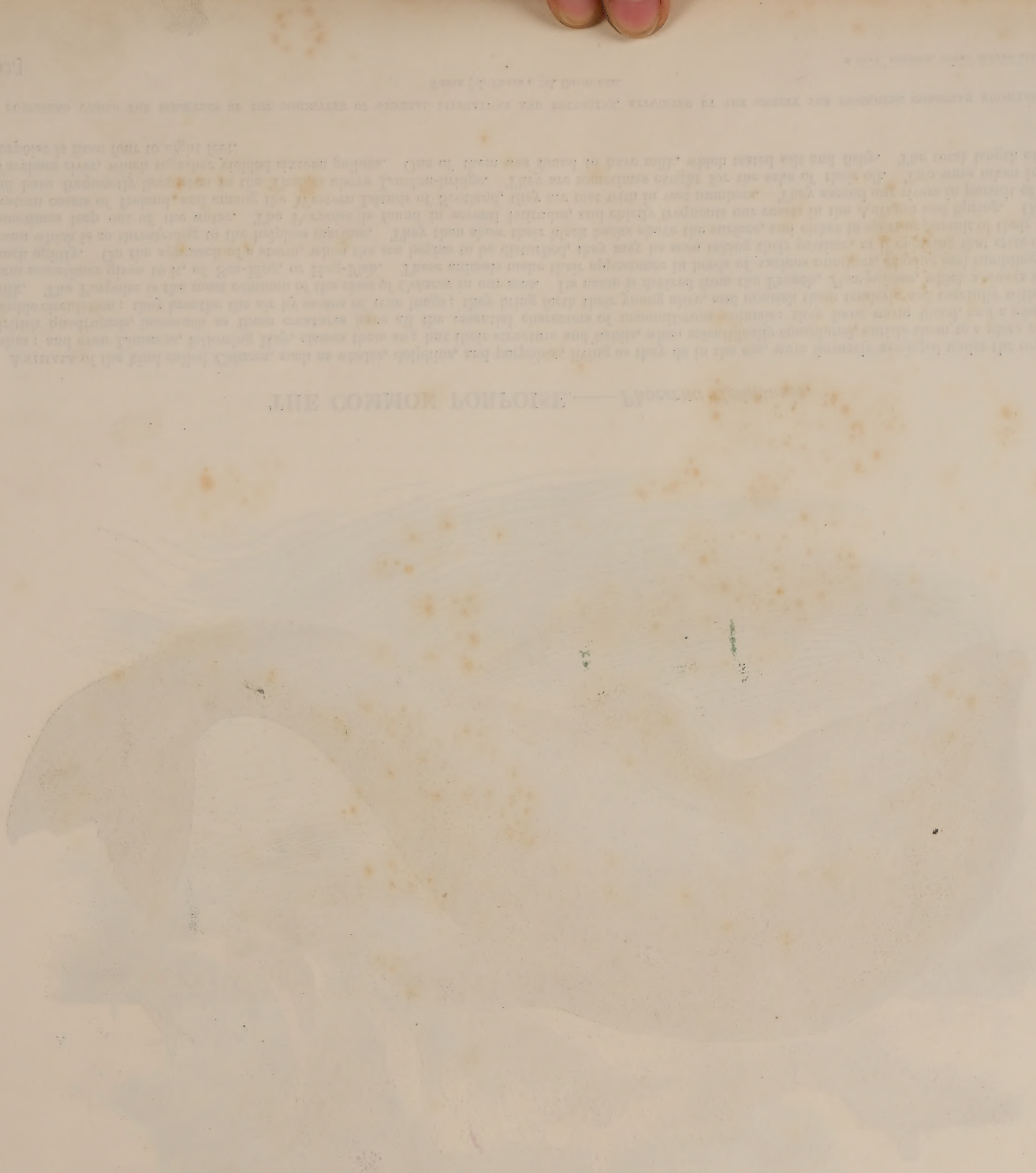

THE GOLDEN EAGLE.——*Aquila Chrysaëtos.*

This rapacious bird is found in various parts of Europe, building its nest in clefts of rocks, or on lofty trees, and sweeping the country round in search of the living animals on which it feeds. It is met with in North America, and is said to be also an inhabitant of Asia Minor and North Africa. It is properly classed among British birds, as it is occasionally seen in some parts of England, and is more common in Scotland, and the Scottish isles. Mr. Mudie, in his "Feathered Tribes of the British Islands," mentions "the higher glens of the rivers that rise on the south-east of the Grampians, the high cliff called Wallace's Craig, on the northern side of Lochlee, and Craig Muskeldie," as places frequented by the Golden Eagle. The flight of this bird is very majestic and powerful. Mounting to a great height, it descends upon its victim with overwhelming rapidity and force, and, if it be not too heavy, bears it off in its talons to its nest. This nest is a flattened platform, several feet square, and consists of strong sticks fastened together. The length of a full-grown male Eagle is nearly three feet; the female is still larger. From the great strength and size of the bird, it preys with ease on fawns, lambs, hares, and other game, sometimes on fish, but rarely on any thing which it finds dead. One of them boldly descended in the sight of some sportsmen in the neighbourhood of Ben-Lomond, and, notwithstanding their shouts and threats, carried off a Red Grouse which they had slightly wounded.

The female bird is said to be very attentive to her young ones, until they are able to take care of themselves. The allusions to the Eagle in the Bible are frequent. God's care of His people is set forth, in the song of Moses, under the following similitude: "As an Eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him."*

* Deut. xxii. 11, 12.

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THE PEREGRINE FALCON.——*Falco peregrinus.*

This species is called Peregrine, from a Latin word signifying *a foreigner*, because it has been found in very distant parts of the world. The Peregrine Falcon is more common in Scotland than in England. In this country it makes its nest on the high cliffs near the Needle Rocks, in the Isle of Wight. It is met with in Devonshire and Cornwall, and is said to be also an inhabitant of rocky situations in Ireland. It is this species which is generally used at the present day by persons who still occasionally pursue the diversion of hawking,—an ancient sport, in which one bird is taught to attack and destroy others. Its extraordinary powers of flight, as well as its habits, are thus illustrated by Walton, in his "Complete Angler:"—"In the air, my noble, generous Falcon ascends to such a height as the dull eyes of beasts and fish are not able to reach to; their bodies are too gross for such high elevation; but from which height I can make her to descend by a word from my mouth, which she both knows and obeys, to accept of meat from my hand, to own me for her master, to go home with me, and be willing the next day to afford me the like recreation." So many were honest Izaak Walton's excellences, that his indifference to the sufferings undergone by animals for the amusement of "the contemplative man," cannot but strike the thoughtful reader of his work. The female Peregrine is called the Falcon, from her greater size, power, and courage, and is usually flown at herons and ducks: the male Peregrine, being much smaller, sometimes one-third less, is called the Tercel, or Tiercel, and is more frequently flown at partridges, magpies, &c. The whole length of a full-grown Peregrine Falcon, is from fifteen to eighteen inches. Sir John Sebright, in his "Observations on Hawking," says, that a well-stocked heronry, in an open country, is necessary for this sport, which may be witnessed in its greatest perfection at Didlington, in Norfolk, the seat of Lord Berners, formerly Colonel Wilson.

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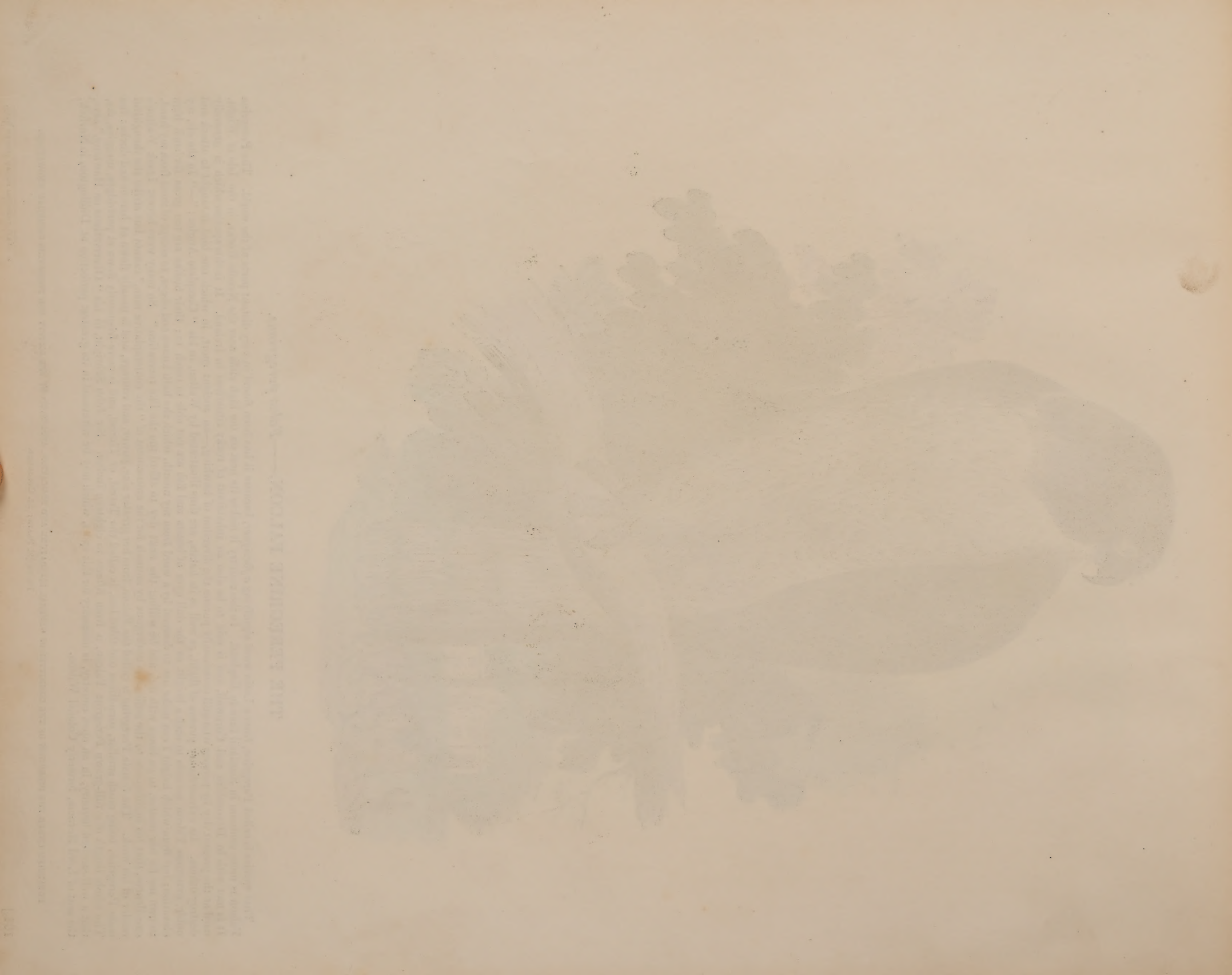

THE NIGHTINGALE.——*Sylvia Luscinia.*

The Nightingale is universally allowed to be the most delightful singer of all the tribe of Warblers. This is a very extensive tribe of birds, most of which migrate, at the approach of cold weather, to warmer climates than ours. The Nightingale usually visits England in the beginning of April, and leaves it in August or September. It has been so long celebrated for the charms of its music, that the idea of harmony seems associated with its name. It begins its song in the evening, and often continues it during the whole night. Its fondness for a particular place is remarkable. It is said that during several weeks together, it will, if undisturbed, perch on the same tree, and from thence pour forth, evening after evening, its beautiful notes. The Nightingale is a solitary bird, and, often as it is heard, is comparatively seldom seen. The colour of its plumage is such as to prevent its being easily discovered on a branch. Hence it has been elegantly styled "the sober-suited songstress." The head and back are of a pale tawny colour, dashed with an olive hue; the throat and breast are of a glossy pale ash colour; the tail of a reddish brown; the eyes are large and bright. The length of the bird is about six inches. It feeds on insects. Mr. Bingley observes, "It is very remarkable that all the gay and brilliant birds of America should be entirely destitute of that pleasing power of song which gives so peculiar a charm to the groves and fields of Europe." The same writer informs us, that a caged nightingale continues its season of singing for a much longer period than those which he heard abroad in the Spring, and that it sings more sweetly than they. The famous anatomist, John Hunter, carefully dissected several Nightingales, and found the muscles of the organ of voice exceedingly strong. In the best singers these muscles were the strongest.

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THE REDBREAST.——*Sylvia Rubecula.*

Who is not acquainted with Robin? and who does not wish to know more of his habits? Some of the earliest rhymes which we loved to hear in childhood are about this interesting little bird. We see it in the field, the wood, and the garden; and there is scarcely a hedge without a Redbreast. The whole length of the bird is five inches and three quarters. In summer it feeds on worms, various insects, fruit, especially cherries, and such berries as it can find. In winter it appeals to man, in its own gentle, yet confident manner, for food; for in that dreary season, when the ground is covered with snow, and worms are difficult to be got at, and there is no fruit. and berries are scarce, it is glad to receive a welcome in a hospitable country-house, or a nice snug cottage, and to be invited to share the crumbs which are freely thrown for it to pick up. With a full dark eye, and sidelong turn of the head, and a sagacious inquiring look, enters Robin, while the family are at breakfast: they see him with pleasure, and scarcely stir till he has gained more confidence: this he soon does, when kindly welcomed;

"then, hopping o'er the floor,
Eyes all the smiling family askance,
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is."*

The nest of the Redbreast is formed of moss and dried grass, lined with hair, and sometimes a few feathers. The eggs are from five to seven in number, white, spotted with pale reddish brown. As to his singing, White of Selborne tells us that "Redbreasts sing all through the spring, summer, and autumn. In the two former seasons their voices are drowned, and lost in the general chorus. In the latter their song becomes distinguishable." The notes are sweet and plaintive, but not powerful. Be it known, however, to our young readers, that there is one quality in the Redbreast for which he must be blamed: he is too much in the habit of fighting with other birds.

* Thomson.

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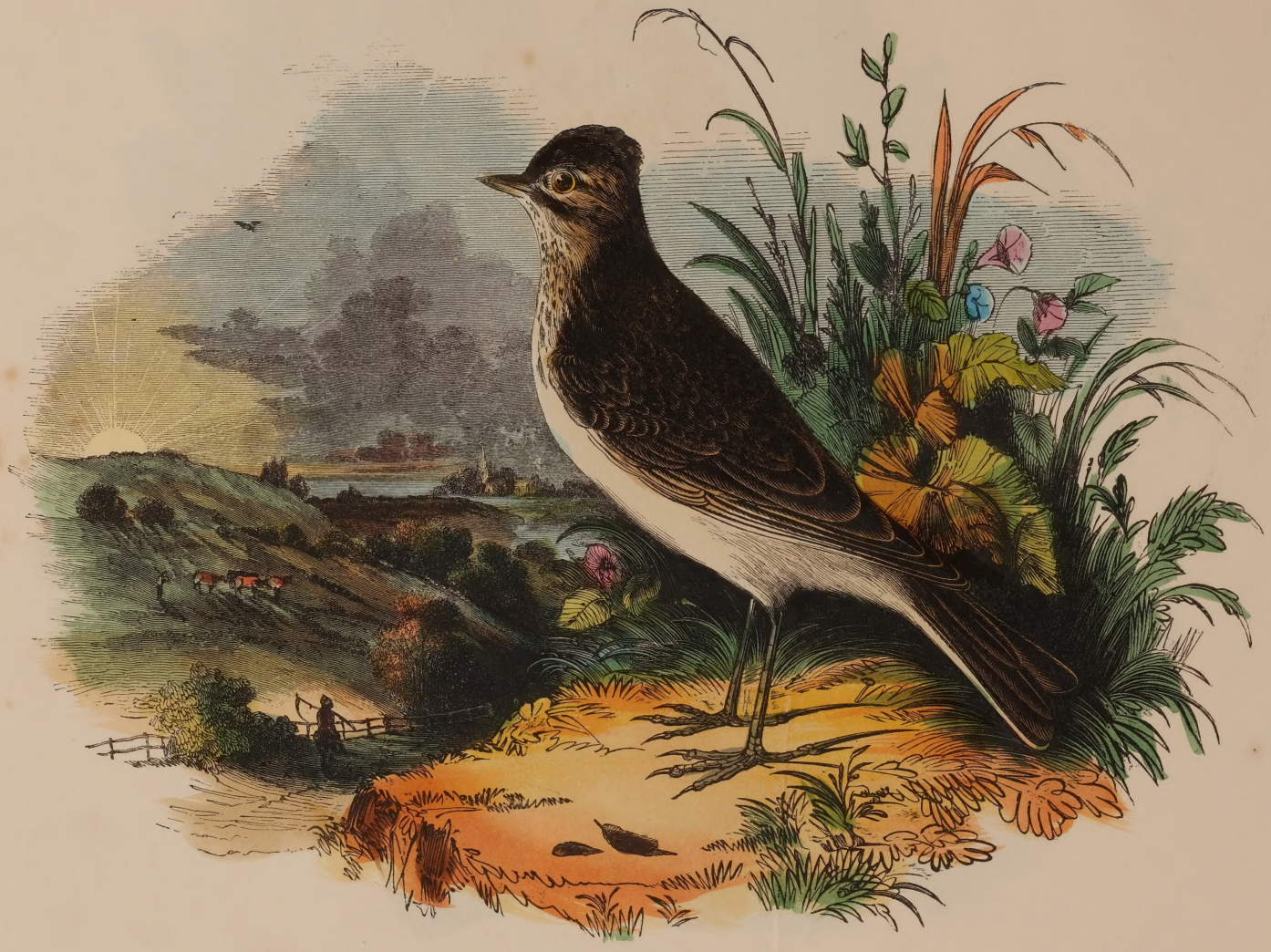

THE SKY-LARK.——*Alauda arvensis.*

All the members of the Lark tribe are musical. The Wood-Lark has a sweet and plaintive tone, but its voice has neither the power nor the variety of the Sky-Lark, which is more generally known, being an inhabitant of most, if not all, the countries of Europe. "In early spring," says Mr. Yarrell, "its cheerful and exhilarating song, fresh as the season, is the admiration of all. The bird rises on quivering wing, almost perpendicularly, singing as he flies, and gaining an elevation that is quite extraordinary; yet so powerful is his voice, that his wild joyous notes may be heard distinctly, when the pained eye can trace his course no longer. An ear well tuned to his song can even then determine by the notes, whether the bird is still ascending, remaining stationary, or on the descent. When at a considerable height, should a hawk appear in sight, or the well-known voice of his mate reach his ear, the wings are closed, and he drops to the earth with the rapidity of a stone. Occasionally the Sky-Lark sings when on the ground; but his most lively strains are poured forth during flight; and even in confinement, this would-be tenant of the free air tramples his turf, and flutters his wings while singing, as if muscular motion were with him a necessary accompaniment to his music."

The food of this bird consists of grain, seeds of grasses, various insects, and worms. The nest is generally placed on the ground, sheltered by a tuft of herbage, or a clod of earth; the eggs are four or five in number, of a greyish white, tinged with green, and mottled with darker grey and ash-brown. The parent-birds are strongly attached to their young: instances are known, not only of a Sky-Lark encountering danger for the sake of its helpless brood, but removing the eggs to some other spot for safety.

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THE COMMON GREY PARROT.——*Psittacus crythacus.*

The species of the Parrot kind are very numerous, being widely spread over Asia and Africa, and some parts of America. The beauty of the scenery in those warm countries in which they abound is much increased by the rich varied plumage, and lively movements, of the several birds of this family, to which belong the Macaw, the Cockatoo, and the Parroquet. They live chiefly on fruit and seeds; though, when kept in a cage, they will occasionally eat both flesh and fish. The Parrot has four toes, two before and two behind, with which it climbs, and which answer the purpose of hands for holding its food, and carrying it to its mouth, in the same manner as squirrels and monkeys use their front paws. There is another habit common to parrots: in climbing or creeping they fasten by the bill, the upper division of which is moveable, and use their feet only as secondary aids.

The bird represented above is well known for its amusing ways in imitating the human voice. It listens with attention, and strives to repeat words; it dwells constantly on some syllables, which it has heard, and seems to set itself tasks, endeavouring each day to recollect its lesson. The accuracy with which parrots, after careful training, are known to utter long sentences, is surprising. Some curious instances of this are related in Bingley's Animal Biography, and in other books. He gives a particular description of one which had been bought by a gentleman at Bristol for one hundred guineas, and for which the purchaser was offered five hundred guineas a year, for the purpose of exhibition. It was a great talker, could whistle a variety of tunes, and beat time with all the exactness of a scientific musician. Its death was announced in the General Evening Post for October 9, 1802. Dr. Goldsmith tells a story of King Henry the Seventh's parrot, which fell out of the window of a room in the palace at Westminster, into the Thames, and at once called aloud, as it had heard people do, "A boat! twenty pounds for a boat!" A waterman passing, took it up, and saved the poor bird's life; and, on a question arising as to the amount to be paid to the man as a reward for restoring the Parrot, it was appealed to, when it instantly screamed out, "Give the knave a groat!" Locke, in his Essay on the Human Understanding, relates a still more extraordinary anecdote, which is quoted by Bingley, of a conversation held with a Parrot in the Brazilian language.

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THE TURTLE-DOVE.——*Columba Turtur.*

The Turtle-Dove is one of the smaller species of this pleasing family, to which belong all the different varieties of the common pigeon, the carrier-pigeon, and many others. Its note is tender and plaintive. It is very kind and constant to its mate, and has often been adduced as an emblem of domestic affection. It builds its nest with a few dry sticks in the boughs. The Dove is spoken of in many parts of the Bible. Noah sent a Dove out of the ark, to ascertain whether the waters of the flood had abated.* The Dove was accounted clean by the law of Moses, and was appointed, on certain occasions, as an offering to the Lord. Thus, we read of "a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons."† It formed one of the articles of merchandise which were improperly allowed to be sold in the Temple at Jerusalem; the traffic in them, within the courts of God's house, having called forth the holy indignation of His blessed Son.‡ The Psalmist says of those who are restored by God's mercy to goodness and happiness, that "they shall be as the wings of a dove, covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold;" and in his troubles he said, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I flee away, and be at rest."§ The Jews, when lamenting the calamities they were suffering for their sins, are represented by Isaiah, as mourning "sore like doves." In the above three passages the inspired writers have used similitudes taken from the beauty of plumage, the rapidity of flight, and the plaintiveness of voice peculiar to these birds. And as to the gentleness of their disposition, Christ, in giving his disciples rules of conduct, when in the midst of their enemies, said, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves;"‖ that is, Act with the prudence and watchfulness of serpents, but cultivate at the same time the innocence and simplicity of the Dove.

* Gen. viii. 8, 9. † Luke ii. 24. ‡ Matt. xxi. 12. § Psalm lv. 6. ‖ Matt. x. 16.

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THE TURKEY.——*Meleagris Gallopavo.*

This useful bird was not known in Europe till about three hundred years ago, when it was brought from America to France. It was imported into England in the reign of Henry the Eighth, and soon became a favourite article of food, especially at the Christmas season. Turkeys are reared in great numbers in Norfolk, Suffolk, Devonshire, and some other counties, whence they are sent to the London markets. In their wild state, in North America, Turkeys herd together in large flocks, but, like the native Indians, they are every year becoming more scarce, having been driven from their former haunts by those who have taken possession of the land. Severe discipline is exercised in these flocks by the old birds, particularly the males, which seem to govern the youngers with great authority. "The young males," says Bishop Stanley, "are called gobblers, and are compelled to live by themselves; for if they venture to approach their seniors, they are sure of being severely punished: many are killed on the spot by repeated blows on the skull." The hunting of birds of this species is a frequent diversion of the natives of Canada. When they have discovered a number collected together, they send a well-trained dog into the midst of them. The birds no sooner perceive their enemy, than they make off at full speed, and with such swiftness, as to leave the dog behind. He however follows, and at last forces them to take shelter in a tree, where they sit exhausted, and incapable of further exertion, till the hunters knock them down with long poles, one after another. Their food consists chiefly of acorns, berries, and insects. The male bird is proverbially of an angry and excitable disposition. The female is generally more mild and gentle; she is often seen with a large family around her; but, though so large and powerful a creature, she gives them very little protection against the attacks of any mischievous animal that comes in her way. She warns them to take care of themselves, but does not, like the common hen, willingly encounter danger for their sakes.

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THE COCK.——*Gallus Domesticus.*

This beautiful bird is generally supposed to have been first brought from Persia. It is now sometimes met with in a wild state in the forests of India, and in some of the oriental islands. Like most of the poultry tribe, the bird before us is bold and resolute. "We know an instance where a barn-door Cock became the terror of his little domain. Accustomed to be fed by his owner, he shortly began to express his disappointment, by very determined attacks, if his master happened to pass him without the accustomed offering. On one occasion he actually struck a piece out of a strong kerseymere gaiter, and repeated the attack in spite of some severe kicks which it was found necessary to inflict in self-defence. Nothing daunted, though occasionally kicked several yards, like a football, he would still come on as fiercely as ever for three or four times. During one of these assaults, he received an injury which lamed him for a week; but no sooner had he recovered than he became as pugnacious as ever."*

Men have sometimes taken a shameful advantage of the temper and habits of these birds for the purpose of cruel sport. Happily for the cause of humanity, and the credit of this country, the savage diversion of cock-fighting, which was once very prevalent, is but little practised; it being now generally considered as cowardly as it is barbarous. The abominable custom of throwing at these birds on Shrove Tuesday was another reproach to some classes of our countrymen. In a Tract on this subject, which was formerly circulated in large numbers by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, is the following passage, which may prove a valuable lesson to those who are guilty of any species of cruelty to animals: "Cowardice and cruelty generally go together; whereas generosity and humanity are the proofs of a brave and dauntless mind. It hath pleased God, of his great bounty, to give us all the creatures for our use and service, but we have not permission to abuse any of them; *A righteous man*, saith the Scripture, *regardeth the life of his beast*."†

The courage of the hen is chiefly shown in taking care of her chickens. She is then equally fearless and tender in defence of her helpless brood. These qualities are adduced by way of illustration, in an affecting and awful manner, in St. Luke xiii. 34. The male bird is mentioned in the New Testament, on the occasion of St. Peter's third denial. The "Cock-crowing" was one of the four watches of the Jews.‡

* Stanley's History of Birds, vol. ii. chap. iv. † Prov. xii. 10. ‡ Mark xiii. 35.

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THE PARTRIDGE.——*Perdix cinerea.*

In England, France, and other parts of Europe, there are beautiful varieties of this valuable bird. The red-legged Partridge is now completely naturalized in this country, being common in Norfolk and Suffolk. In America there are other sorts peculiar to that part of the globe. The common Partridge, which we know so well, usually builds in corn-fields; however, it sometimes chooses a very different kind of nursery, as, for instance, a hay-stack. The eggs are frequently destroyed by weasels, stoats, crows, magpies, and other animals; but when the parent-birds have their young ones safe about them, their care of them is wonderful. They lead them out to feed; they point out to them the proper places for their food, and assist them in finding it by scratching the ground with their feet. It happens that at the time when these little birds most require help, the several species of ants are to be easily met with; and on these they satisfy their hunger, as well as on worms and flies.

The Rev. G. White, in his account of Selborne, has some interesting remarks on the attention shown by this and other birds to their helpless brood:—"The more I reflect on the instinctive affection of animals for their young, the more am I astonished at its effects. This affection quickens the invention, and sharpens the sagacity of the brute creation. Thus a hen, just become a mother, is no longer the placid bird she used to be; but, with feathers on end, wings hovering, and clucking note, she runs about like one possessed. Mothers will throw themselves in the way of the greatest danger, to defend their young. A Partridge will tumble along before a sportsman, in order to draw away the dogs from her helpless covey. In the time of nest-building the most feeble birds will assault the most rapacious. All the swallows and martins of a village are up in arms at the sight of a hawk, whom they will persecute till he leaves the district." What a lesson do the inferior creatures often furnish to the human race! And how inexcusable are they, who, with reason and revelation offered as their guides, unnaturally neglect their offspring in childhood and youth, showing themselves, not only indifferent to the present support and comfort of their children, but to their religious condition as immortal beings intrusted to parental care!

To "hunt the partridge in the mountains," is alluded to in the Holy Scripture, as customary in the time of Saul;* and Bishop Stanley, in his History of Birds, gives us a curious account, from Franklin's "Constantinople," of the manner in which Partridges are taken in the present day by the Arabs of Mount Lebanon.†

* 1 Sam. xxvi. 20.

† Familiar History of Birds, Vol. ii. p. 3. Ed. 1840.

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THE QUAIL.——*Perdix Coturnix.*

This is the smallest bird of the poultry tribe. It is well known in Europe, but migrates, on the approach of cold weather, to a warmer climate, proceeding to the African coast, and as far as Arabia and Persia. It is a courageous and quarrelsome bird. Taking advantage of these qualities, the Athenians of old diverted themselves with the exhibition of Quail-fighting; but they abstained from eating the flesh. We, on the contrary, esteem this bird a delicacy, but never encourage it to fight.

Modern travellers illustrate the account given in the Scriptures of the vast numbers of Quails, and the mode of drying them for food. After referring to the Book of Numbers xi. 31, 32, the reader will peruse with interest the following extract from Stade's Travels in Turkey:—"Near Constantinople, in the autumn, the sun is often nearly obscured by the prodigious flights of Quails, which alight on the coasts of the Black Sea, near the Bosphorus, and are caught by means of nets spread on high poles, planted along the cliffs, some yards from its edge; against which, the birds, exhausted by their passage over the sea, strike themselves and fall. In October 1829, the Sultan sent orders to his admirals to catch four hundred dozen; in three days they were collected, and brought to him alive, in small cages." The Egyptians take them at harvest-time by thousands in nets, and, having stripped off their feathers, dry them in the burning sand, after which they are worth but one penny a pound. The object of the Israelites, therefore, in spreading them round the camp, was to dry them. The Psalmist, in his exhortation to praise God for his providential care of the Israelites, by feeding them in the wilderness, says: "The people asked, and He brought quails, and satisfied them with the bread of heaven." *

* Psalm cv. 40.

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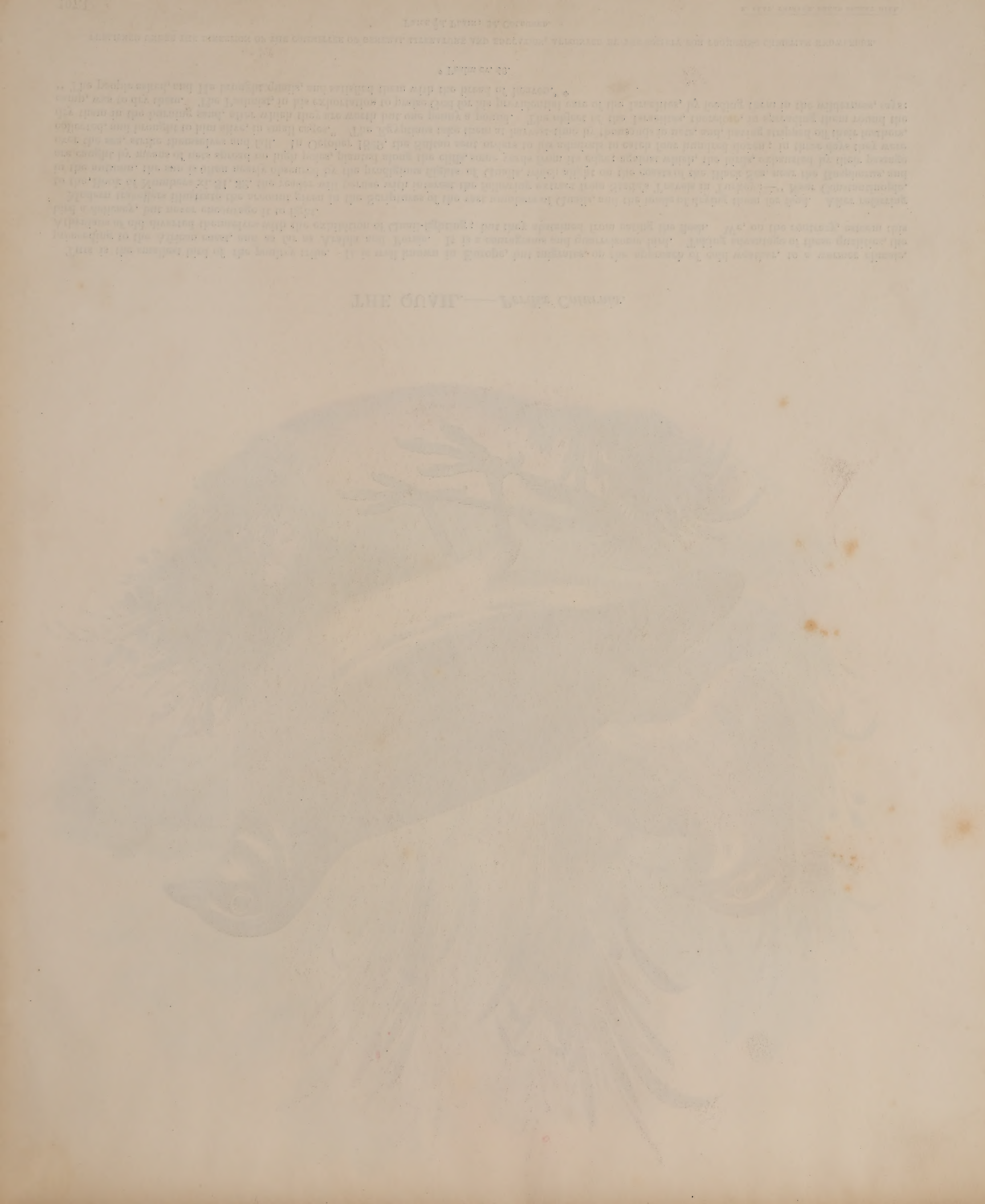

THE FLAMINGO.——*Phœnicopterus ruber.*

This is a very extraordinary bird. Its legs are of a great length, and so slender that at a little distance the one leg on which it usually stands is not easily seen, and the bird seems stationary in the air. It hatches its eggs, sitting astride on a nest of raised earth, as its long legs prevent its adopting any other position for that purpose. The common species, represented above, is sometimes more than six feet in height, and above four feet long from the bill to the tail. Its plumage varies in colour, according to the age of the bird. In the third year, when it is full-grown, the back is of a purple red, and the wings of a bright rose colour. Bishop Stanley, in his account of the Flamingo, notices the "almost broken and deformed appearance of the beak," and the manner in which the creature feeds, by turning its head, and scooping up the soft substances on which it preys, using the upper mandible as a sort of spoon. These birds were once known on the coasts of Europe, but are now chiefly found in America, and certain parts of Africa. In some of the wild and solitary tracts of America, they live in a state of society, which cannot but excite our wonder. It is said that they are always met with in flocks, and that they form in file for the purpose of fishing, having quite a soldier-like appearance. They are accustomed to establish sentinels for common safety; and whether reposing in ranks, or fishing, one of them always stands on the watch with his head erect. If any thing alarms him, he sets up a cry like the sound of a trumpet, when the flock moves off with great rapidity, but in a settled order of flight. The ancient epicures admired the flesh of the Flamingo, especially its tongue; but the tongue is said to be oily, and of an unpleasant flavour to modern palates. Attempts have been made to domesticate this bird, but in our climate it soon languishes and dies. One of them lost a leg by an accident, and afterwards walked with the other, using its bill and neck like a crutch. The down is useful. The Indians make bonnets of the feathers. The Sardinians form the bone of the leg into a flute.

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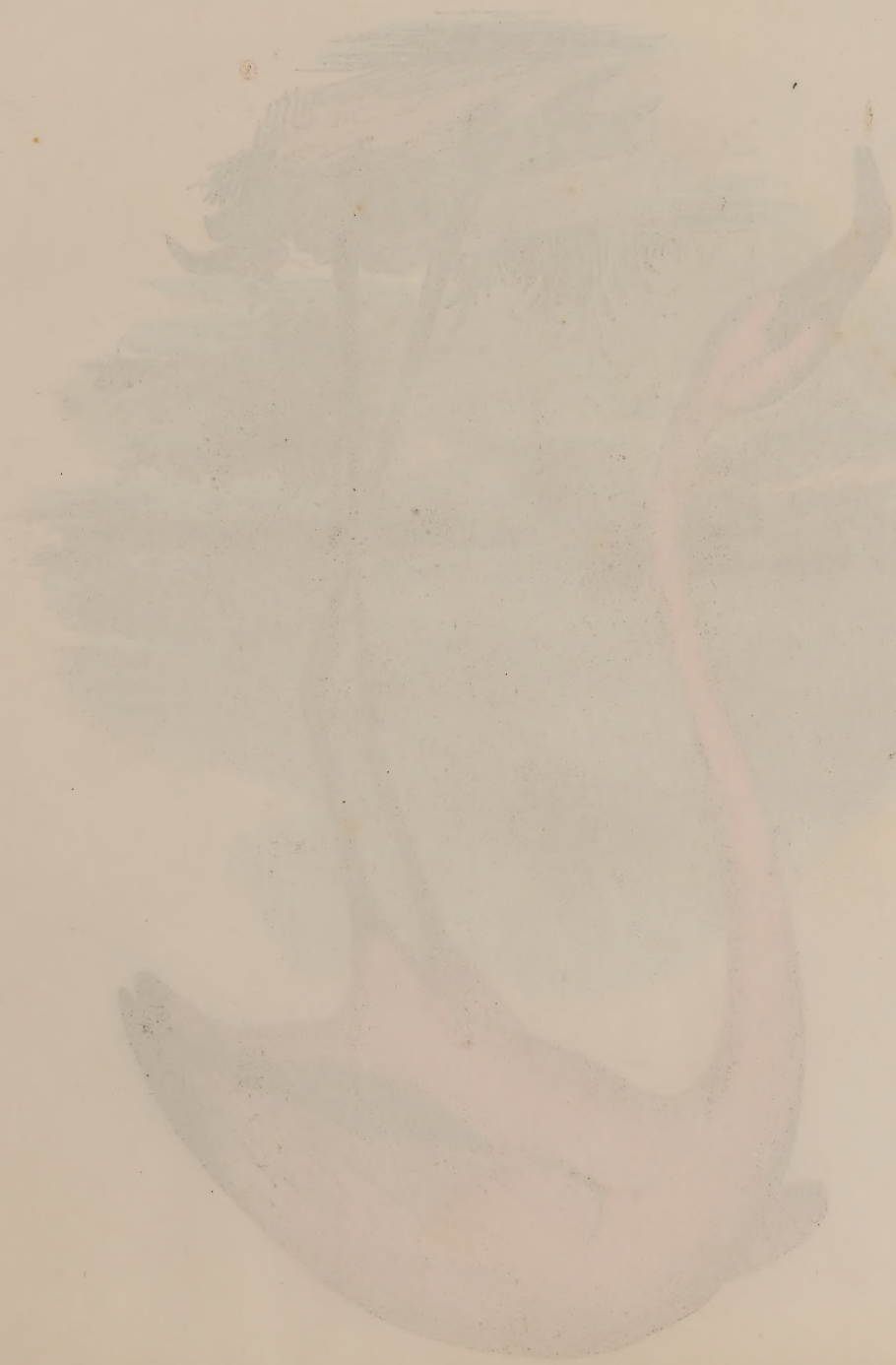

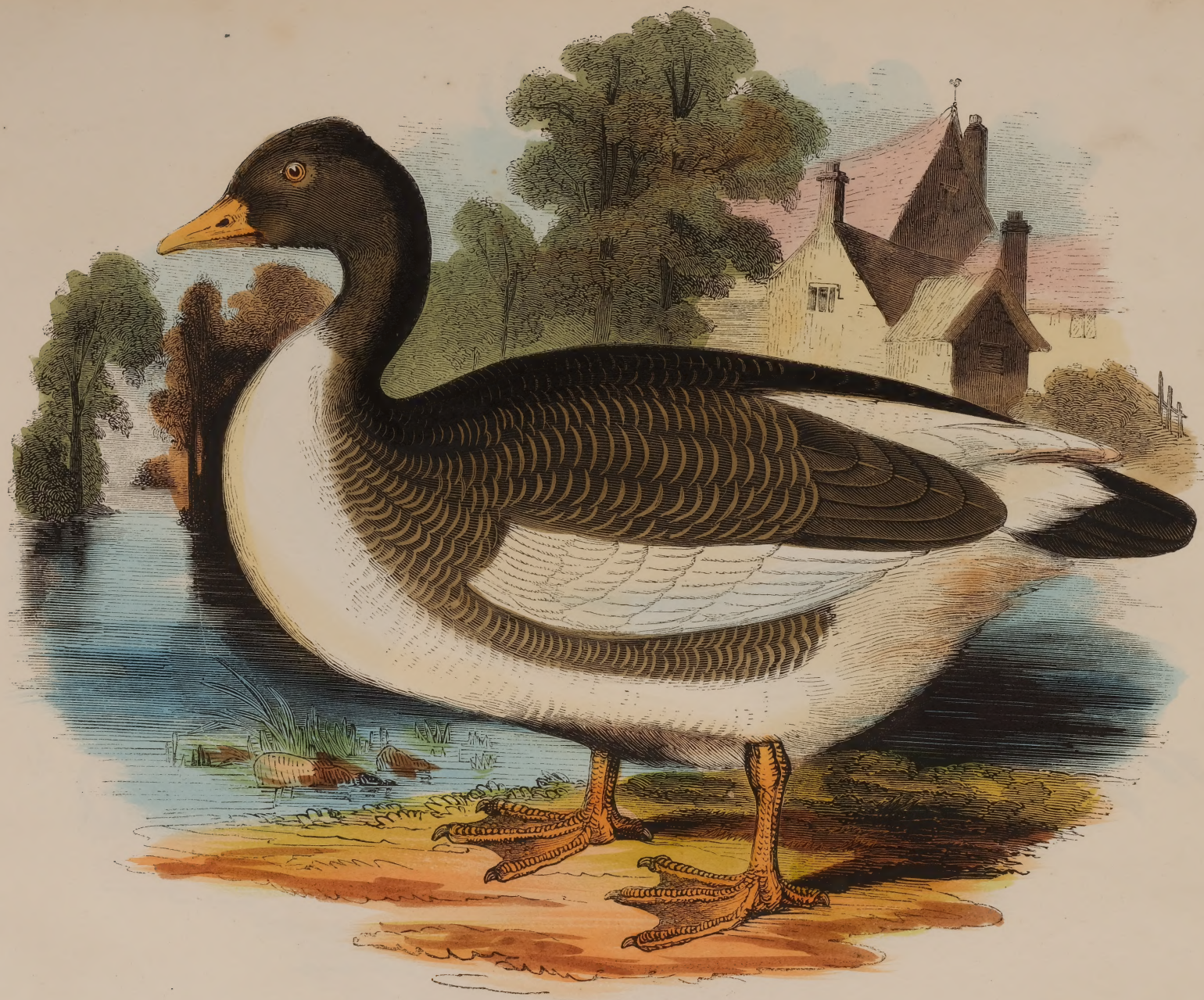

THE COMMON GOOSE.——*Anas domesticus.*

The order of *web-footed* birds consists of those which are evidently calculated for swimming, having their toes connected with a web extending nearly to the nails. Our common tame Goose is of great service to man in various ways. It is valuable as an article of food, while its quills and feathers serve many important uses; though, since the general introduction of steel pens, its quills are in less request in this country than they formerly were. Geese are kept in vast quantities in the fens of Lincolnshire, and are sent from thence to London, when ready for market, in droves of from two to nine thousand. Persons who keep flocks of these birds in the country generally pluck them for feathers and quills four or five times in a year, and thus find them very profitable. The old geese submit with tolerable patience to this cruel operation, but the young ones are clamorous and unruly. Cottagers and others, living near commons, can turn the rearing of a few geese to good account. But besides the pecuniary worth of the Goose, it has certain qualities which ought to have secured it from the contempt in which, for its alleged stupidity, it is often held: it shows constancy and affection, not only to its own species, and to other birds and animals, but particularly to man; and it is not improbable that these qualities, which were known to the ancients, might have rendered it an object of high esteem, and occasioned its being consecrated to Juno, the queen of their idol gods. We learn from Livy, that, 2230 years since, some of these birds saved the citadel of Rome from the invasion of the Gauls, who during the night had nearly succeeded in obtaining an entrance within the walls. But the geese commenced a loud cackling, and awakened the Romans in time to force the enemy to retire.

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THE COMMON DUCK.——*Anas Boschas, (Domestic variety.)*

This is one of the tribe of swimmers. There are many species of the Duck; but the bird represented above is so familiar to all, that it is not necessary to describe it. It appears, from the statements of good naturalists, that cottagers and others who rear ducks would do well to prevent the young ones from swimming until they are more than a month old, water not being necessary for them for some time; and that the ducklings should be fed upon barley-meal, or curds, and kept in a warm place at night. Of all people in the world, the Chinese are said to be the most skilled in the management of poultry, particularly of ducks; many persons at Canton earning their livelihood merely by bringing them up: some buy the eggs and trade with them; some hatch them in ovens, and others attend on the young ones. Ducks, like geese, have a strong sense of affection; in illustration of which, Bishop Stanley tells the following pleasing anecdote:—"A clergyman had a very fierce and noisy house dog, within the length of whose chain it would have been dangerous for a stranger to have ventured; but, notwithstanding his apparently savage disposition, a brood of ducklings, reared in the yard in which he was kept, soon became so fond of him, that whenever, from his barking, they apprehended danger, they would rush towards him for protection, and seek shelter in his kennel."

The same writer concludes his history of Ducks with an account of the decoys, which are formed of wicker-work and netting, and by means of which, through the help of tame birds called Decoy Ducks, and dogs trained for this purpose, vast numbers of wild fowl are taken every year.

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THE CORACOID.—Golden Cormorant.

THE CORMORANT.——*Carbo Cormoranus.*

These birds are found on many of our sea-coasts, and are common in the isles of Scotland. They build their nests on the highest parts of the cliffs that hang over the sea. They are proverbial for their voracity, each Cormorant devouring three or four pounds of fish a day, which is about half the average weight of the bird. Like most birds living on fish, however, its digestion is extremely rapid, and it requires a proportionably larger supply of food. If deprived of this, it soon dies. On the Western coast of the Hebrides, in severe gales, when no fish are to be got, these poor birds are to be seen huddled together in their caves and crevices, perishing with hunger. The talent for fishing possessed by some of this species is turned to good account by the crafty Chinese fisherman, who fastens an iron ring round the bird's neck, so that it cannot swallow: thus prepared, he sits quietly in his boat till he sees a fish, when the bird is tossed into the water; it presently rises with the fish, which is taken out by the boatman, who then waits for another chance. Thus it appears that the Cormorant may be easily tamed. Bishop Stanley mentions a couple which were kept as "pets," and were found to be quiet enough except when pressed by hunger. One day a gentleman's servant, who went in to look at them, had on a pair of red plush breeches, which instantly caught their attention. These they probably mistook for raw meat, which was their ordinary food: they consequently made such a furious charge upon the poor young man, that the owner was obliged to attack them with a stick, and even then could not keep them off without difficulty. They were at last sent away for killing a favourite pointer.

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THE BOA CONSTRICTOR.——*Boa Constrictor.*

The Boa Constrictor is a tremendous kind of serpent, different species of which are met with in the East Indies, in Africa, and in some parts of South America. This enormous reptile is often found to measure thirty feet in length. Its colour is of a dusky yellow, marked with large brown spots, bordered with black; the scales are round, small and smooth. In its native country it lies hidden in thickets, whence it suddenly rushes out, and, raising itself upright, attacks man or beast without distinction. One of these creatures had been waiting for some time near the brink of a pool, in expectation of its prey, when a buffalo approached, unconscious of the presence of so terrible an enemy. The serpent having darted upon the poor animal, began to wrap it round in its folds; and at every turn, the bones of the buffalo were heard to crack. Unable to escape, it struggled and roared, but could not get free, till, its bones being crushed to pieces, and the whole body reduced to a mere mass, the serpent untwined itself in order to swallow it at leisure. To do this the more easily, it licked the body all over. It then gradually swallowed it at one morsel, the buffalo being three times as thick as itself. The bite of this snake is not venomous; but the creature is scarcely less mischievous on this account, so great is its cunning, boldness, and strength. There is at this time (1843) one of them in the Surrey Zoological Gardens, which some time since attacked its keeper, coiling itself about him. Had it not been for timely and powerful aid, on his calling for help, he would most probably have soon been killed. Mr. Cops, one of the keepers of the animals in the Tower of London, was, some years since, attacked by a Boa Constrictor, and rescued in the same way.

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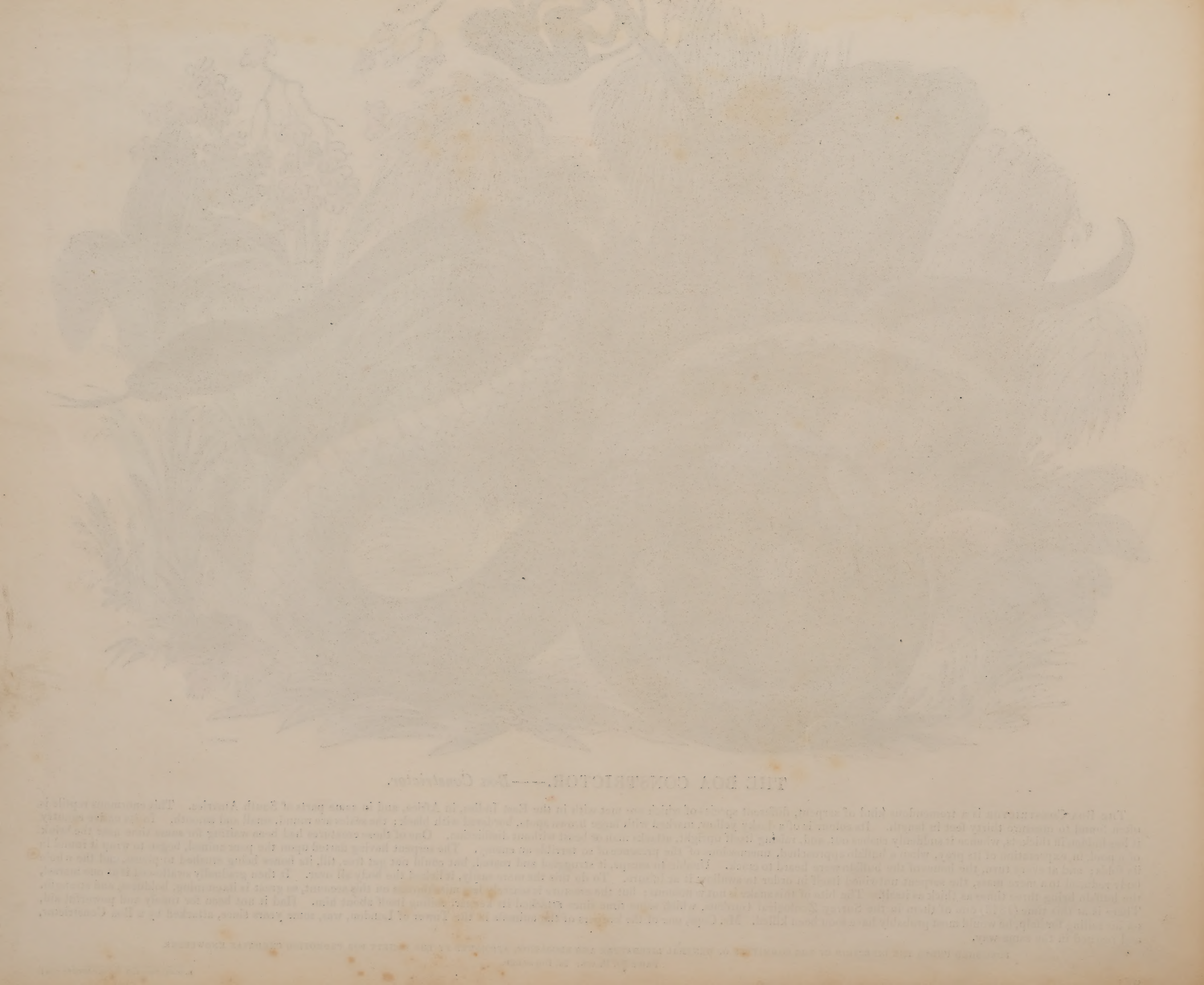

THE RATTLE-SNAKE.——*Crotalus Horridus.*

This poisonous reptile is found in the continent of America. Its venom is said to be more virulent than that of any creature of the same class; but happily it seldom employs its fatal power, except when induced by hunger, or for the purpose of self-preservation. It is extremely sluggish, and generally avoids the sight of man. The poison is inserted into the body of its victim by means of two long, sharp-pointed teeth or fangs, which grow, one on each side of the upper jaw. The root of each fang rests on a kind of bag, containing a certain quantity of liquid poison; and when the animal bites, a portion of this fluid is forced through an opening in the tooth, and lodged at the bottom of the wound. Another peculiarity of the poison-teeth is, that, when not in use, they turn back, as it were, upon an hinge, and lie flat in the roof of the animal's mouth. Some persons have imagined that the Rattle-Snake has a power of fascinating its prey. The idea probably arose from the circumstance of the smaller animals, on which this snake subsists, becoming so terrified at the sight of their frightful enemy, as to lose their self-possession when in its presence. Its name is given to it on account of the wonderful apparatus with which its tail is furnished. This consists of a series of hollow, horn-like substances, placed loosely one against the other, in such a manner as to produce a rattling noise when the tail is shaken; and as the animal, when intending an attack, gives a tremulous action to the tail, timely notice is afforded of the threatened danger. It is said that the number of pieces of which this rattle is formed indicates the age of the snake, as a fresh portion grows every year. The mechanism of the jaw of most serpents is very wonderful, allowing them, from its vast power of expansion, to swallow animals of great comparative size. Like all other creatures which swallow their prey whole, the teeth appear to be formed chiefly for preventing its escape, and not for the purposes of mastication. The effect of music upon snakes is very powerful, and is often employed by the serpent-charmers of India. Viscount Chateaubriand relates, that, in July 1791, in Upper Canada, he saw a native appease the anger of a Rattle-Snake, and even cause it to follow him, by the music of his flute. This reminds us of the words of the Psalmist, when, speaking of the wicked, he says, "Their poison is like the poison of a serpent; they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely."*

* Psalm lviii. 4, 5.

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THE SWORD-FISH.——*Xiphias Gladius.*

This is a large and powerful fish, sometimes weighing a hundred pounds and more. It is found in the Mediterranean. It will attack almost any living creature that happens to fall in its way. It derives its name from the formidable weapon, of the substance of bone, which extends like a sword from its upper jaw, and with which it destroys its prey. The Sword-fish and whale are said often to come to battle; and the only protection which the whale has against his enemy, is to dive to the bottom, in order to protect the under part of his body, or else to swim away, and so escape. The force with which the Sword-fish uses its tremendous weapon is astonishing. In 1725, when his Majesty's ship Leopard, after her return from the coast of Guinea and the West Indies, was refitted for the channel service, in stripping off her sheathing, the shipwrights found in the lower part of the vessel a portion of the sword or snout of one of these fish. On the outside this was rough, and not unlike seal-skin; the broken end appeared like coarse ivory. The weapon pointed from the ship's stern towards the head; the fish must therefore have followed and overtaken the ship while sailing. It had penetrated the sheathing, an inch thick, passed through the planking, three inches thick, and beyond that four inches into the timber. The workmen declared that, with a hammer of a quarter of a hundred weight, it would have required nine blows to drive in a substance of the same kind, although the fish had effected it by a single thrust.

The captain of an East-Indiaman, in a letter to Sir Joseph Banks, gives an account of a similar attack upon his own ship, so that the whole length of the sword was embedded in the ship.

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112.]

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THE COMMON CARP.——*Cyprinus Carpio.*

It is not known when Carp were first brought into England, but they are mentioned in the "Boke of St. Albans," which was printed by Wynkyn de Worde, in 1496. The old couplet is certainly incorrect, which says,

"Turkies, Carps, Hops, Pickerell, and Beer,
Came into England all in one year,"

as both turkies and hops were unknown till upwards of twenty years after the date above mentioned. In this country the Carp inhabits ponds, lakes, and rivers; preferring in the lakes, those parts where the current is not strong, and thriving best where the ground is soft and marly. They probably eat scarcely anything in winter, and are supposed to bury themselves in mud. White, in his Natural History of Selborne, says; "In the garden of the Black Bear inn, Reading, is a stream or canal running under the stables and out into the fields on the other side of the road. In this water are many Carps, which lie rolling about in sight, being fed by travellers, who amuse themselves by tossing them bread; but as soon as the weather grows at all severe, these fishes are no longer seen, because they retire under the stables, where they remain till the return of Spring." Mr. Jesse says of some Carp and Tench, which were kept by him in a small piece of water, "They were soon reconciled to their situation, and ate boiled potatoes in considerable quantities; and the Carp seemed to have lost their original shyness, eating in my presence without any scruple." This fish, when out of water, is exceedingly tenacious of life. It is said to be a practice in Holland to keep Carp alive for three or four weeks, by hanging them in a cool place with wet moss in a net, and feeding them with bread soaked in milk. The animal is refreshed, now and then, water being thrown over it. Carp are in season for the table from October to April; and, as Mr. Yarrell remarks, "they are greatly indebted to the cook for the estimation in which they are held."

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THE COMMON TROUT.——*Salmo Fario.*

The Trout is a well-known inhabitant of most of the rivers and lakes of Great Britain. It is a voracious feeder, but so vigilant, cautious, and active, that much skill and patience are necessary for taking it. Its food generally consists of flies, though worms and small fish are eagerly devoured by it. Mr. Stoddart, a writer on Angling, mentions an interesting experiment, which was made some years ago in the South of England, in order to ascertain the effect of different kinds of food on this fish. "Some Trout were placed in three separate tanks, one of which was supplied daily with worms, another with live minnows, and the third with those small dark-coloured water-flies which are to be found moving about on the surface under banks and sheltered places. The Trout fed with worms grew slowly, and had a lean appearance; those nourished on minnows, at which they darted with great voracity, became much larger; while such as were fattened upon flies only attained in a short time prodigious dimensions, weighing twice as much as both the others together," although the quantity of food swallowed by the fly-eaters was not so great. Trout sometimes reach a vast size, and are said to live to a great age. One was caught at Salisbury, in January, 1822, in a small stream, branching from the Avon, which weighed twenty-five pounds; but this was an extraordinary specimen. They are met with of good size in the Thames near Kingston and Hampton Court, Shepperton and Chertsey. Some deep pools in the Thames above Oxford afford excellent Trout. "Few persons," says Mr. Yarrell, "are aware of the difficulty of taking a Trout, when it has attained twelve or fourteen pounds weight: it is very seldom that one of this size is hooked and landed except by a first-rate fisherman. Such a fish, when in good condition, is considered a present worthy of a place at a royal table." The Trout is fond of its own particular place in the stream; and the peasants, in Devonshire and elsewhere, frequently catch the fish with their hands, the water being rendered turbid. This they call "tickling Trout."

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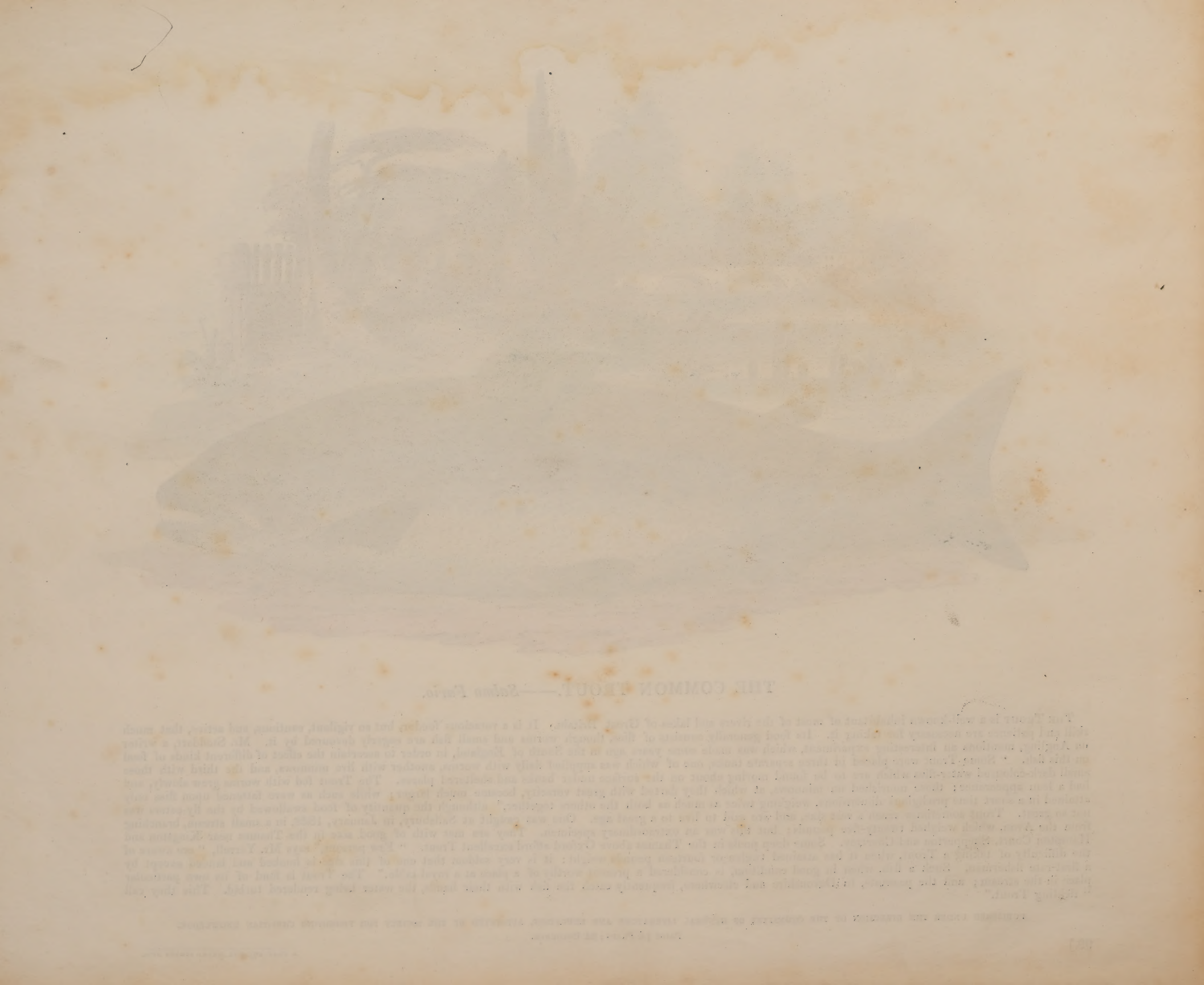

THE HADDOCK——*Gadus Æglefinus.*

This fish is almost as well known as the common cod; and from the quantities taken round the coast, and the ease with which the flesh can be preserved, it is a fish of great value. Besides frequenting the coast of Great Britain, the Haddock may be traced nearly all round the shores of Ireland. The largest seen for some years past, was taken in Dublin Bay, it having weighed sixteen pounds. The most common weight of a Haddock is from two to four pounds. Haddocks swim in innumerable shoals. Along the Eastern coast, from Yarmouth to the Tyne, they are caught with long-lines and hand-lines. The most attractive baits are pieces of herring or sand-launce. Along our Southern shore they are frequently taken with the trawl-net. Their food is small fish of various kinds. Some which were kept confined in a salt-water preserve, became so tame, that they ate limpets, one after another from the hand. Mr. Yarrell, in his History of British Fishes, has the following remark in allusion to the name of Onos or Asinus, which is supposed to have been given by the ancients to this fish. "The dark mark on the shoulder of the Haddock very frequently extends over the back, and unites with the patch of the shoulder on the other side, forcibly reminding the observer of the dark stripe over the withers of the ass. The superstition that assigns the mark on the Haddock to the impression left by St. Peter with his finger and thumb, when he took the tribute-money* out of a fish of this species, has been continued to the whole race of Haddocks ever since the miracle, and may possibly have had its origin in the obvious similarity of this mark on the same part of the body of the Haddock, and of the humble animal which bore the Saviour. That the reference to St. Peter is erroneous, is shown by the fact, that the Haddock does not exist in the sea of the country in which the miracle was performed." This superstition would not have been alluded to here, but for the circumstance of the Haddock being sometimes called St. Peter's fish.

* Matt. xvii. 27.

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